



# FEMA

## NEWS RELEASE STATE/FEDERAL DISASTER FIELD OFFICE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER



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November 20, 2003  
DR1499: PR 015

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Public Assistance Approved for Seven Counties**

*Governmental entities, certain private, nonprofit organizations and other essential governmental services may qualify*

EVERETT, WA —The State of Washington and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today that seven Washington counties are now eligible to apply for state and federal disaster assistance to repair or replace infrastructure damaged by the severe storms of October 15-23.

“Governmental entities in Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom Counties can apply for help with eligible costs associated with debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairing or replacing damaged public facilities,” said Anthony Russell, Federal Coordinating Officer for the disaster. “Disaster assistance may also be provided to repair, restore or replace facilities owned by certain private, nonprofit organizations.”

Private nonprofit groups that operate and maintain educational, utility, emergency, medical, custodial care or other essential governmental service facilities may be qualified for aid under the Public Assistance declaration.

Washington State Coordinating Officer Diane Offord said, “The Public Assistance declaration will help these counties with needed financial aid to repair or replace damaged public property. This assistance will go a long way toward restoring much needed public services.”

The first step toward providing assistance will be an applicant’s briefing for **local officials** and certain **nonprofit organizations**. The Washington Emergency Management Division and FEMA will conduct these briefings. Dates and times will be announced soon.

These briefings do not deal with individual’s needs. Residents that were affected by the storms need to call the toll-free registration number to apply for assistance. That number is 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). Hearing and speech impaired individuals may call TTY 1-800-462-7585.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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**Note to Editors:** Disaster information is available on FEMA’s World Wide Web at <http://www.fema.gov> or the Washington Emergency Management Division at <http://emd.wa.gov>.